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THE HOUR GLASS
BY
W. B. YEATS
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The virtuous virtues can be seen
loyalty

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THE HOUR-GLASS
NEW VERSION
THE PERSONS OF THE PLAY
WISE MAN.
BRIDGET, his wife.
TEIGUE, a fool.
ANGEL.
Children and Pupils.

Pupils come in and stand before the stage curtain which is still closed. One pupil carries a book.

FIRST PUPIL

He said we might choose the subject for the lesson.

SECOND PUPIL

There is none of us wise enough to do that.

THIRD PUPIL

It would need a great deal of wisdom to know what it is we want to know.

FOURTH PUPIL

I will question him.

FIFTH PUPIL

You?

FOURTH PUPIL

Last night I dreamt that someone came and told me to question him. I was to say to him, 'you were wrong to say there is no God and no soul— maybe,

if there is not much of either, there is yet some tatters, some tag on the wind—so to speak—some rag upon a bush, some bob-tail of a god.' I will argue with him,—nonsense though it be—according to my dream, and you will see how well I can argue, and what thoughts I have.

FIRST PUPIL

I'd as soon listen to dried peas in a bladder, as listen to your thoughts. (Fool comes in)

FOOL

Give me a penny.

SECOND PUPIL

Let us choose a subject by chance. Here is his big book. Let us turn over the pages slowly. Let one of us put down his finger without looking. The passage his finger lights on will be the subject for the lesson.

FOOL

Give me a penny.

THIRD PUPIL

(taking up book) How heavy it is.

FOURTH PUPIL

Spread it on Teigue's back, and then we can all stand round and see the choice.

SECOND PUPIL

Make him spread out his arms.

FOURTH PUPIL

Down on your knees. Hunch up your back. Spread your arms out now, and look like a golden eagle in a church. Keep still, Keep still.

FOOL

Give me a penny.

THIRD PUPIL

Is that the right cry for an eagle rock?

SECOND PUPIL

I'll turn the pages—you close your eyes and put your finger down.

THIRD PUPIL

That's it, and then he cannot blame us for the choice.

FIRST PUPIL

There, I have chosen. Fool, keep still—and if what's wise is strange and sounds like nonsense, we've made a good choice.

FIFTH PUPIL

The Master has come.

FOOL

Will anybody give a penny to a fool? (One of the pupils draws back the stage curtain showing the Master sitting at his desk. One pupil puts the book before him)

FIRST PUPIL

We have chosen the passage for the lesson, Master.

‘There are two living countries, one visible and one invisible, and when it is summer there, it is winter here, and when it is November with us, it is lam-bing-time there.’

WISE MAN

That passage, that passage! what mischief has there been since yesterday?

FIRST PUPIL

None, Master.

WISE MAN

Oh, yes, there has; some craziness has fallen from the wind, or risen from the graves of old men, and made you choose that subject.

FOURTH PUPIL

I knew that it was folly, but they would have it.

THIRD PUPIL

Had we not better say we picked it by chance?

SECOND PUPIL

No, he would say we were children still.

FIRST PUPIL

I have found a sentence under that one that says— as though to show it had a hidden meaning— a beggar wrote it upon the walls of Babylon.

WISE MAN

Then find some beggar and ask him what it means, for I will have nothing to do with it.

FOURTH PUPIL

Come, Teigue, what is the old book's meaning when it says that there are sheep that drop their lambs in November?

FOOL

To be sure—everybody knows, everybody in the world knows, when it is Spring with us, the trees are withering there, when it is summer with us, the snow is falling there, and have I not myself heard the lambs that are there all bleating on a cold November day—to be sure, does not everybody with an intellect know that; and maybe when it's night with us, it is day with them, for many a time I have seen the roads lighted before me.

WISE MAN

The beggar who wrote that on Babylon wall meant that there is a spiritual kingdom that cannot be seen or known till the faculties whereby we master the kingdom of this world wither away, like green things in winter. A monkish thought, the most mischievous thought that ever passed out of a man's mouth.

FIRST PUPIL

If he meant all that, I will take an oath that he was spindle-shanked, and cross-eyed, and had a lousy itching shoulder, and that his heart was crosser

than his eyes, and that he wrote it out of malice.

SECOND PUPIL

Let's come away and find a better subject.

FOURTH PUPIL

And maybe now you'll let me choose.

FIRST PUPIL

Come.

WISE MAN

Were it but true t'would alter everything
Until the stream of the world had changed its
course,

And that and all our thoughts had run
Into some cloudy thunderous spring
They dream to be its source—

Aye, to some frenzy of the mind;
And all that we have done would be undone,
Our speculation as the wind. (A pause)
I have dreamed it twice.

FIRST PUPIL

Something has troubled him.

(Pupils go out)

WISE MAN

Twice have I dreamed it in a morning dream,
Now nothing serves my pupils but to come
With a like thought. Reason is growing dim.
A moment more and Frenzy will beat his drum
And laugh aloud and scream.

And I must dance in the dream,
No, no, but it is like a hawk, a hawk of the air,
It has swooped down— and this swoop makes the
third—

And what can I, but tremble like a bird?

FOOL

Give me a penny.

WISE MAN

That I should dream it twice, and after that, that
they should pick it out.

FOOL

Won't you give me a penny?

WISE MAN

What do you want? What can it matter to you
whether the words I am reading, are wisdom or
sheer folly?

FOOL

Such a great wise teacher will not refuse a penny to
a fool.

WISE MAN

Seeing that everybody is a fool when he is asleep
and dreaming, why do you call me wise?

FOOL

O, I know,— I know, I know what I have seen.

WISE MAN

Well, to see rightly is the whole of wisdom, what-
ever dream be with us.

FOOL

When I went by Kilcluan, where the bells used to be ringing at the break of every day, I could hear nothing but the people snoring in their houses. When I went by Tubbervanach, where the young men used to be climbing the hill to the blessed well, they were sitting at the cross-roads playing cards. When I went by Carrigoras, where the friars used to be fasting and serving the poor, I saw them drinking wine and obeying their wives. And when I asked what misfortune had brought all these changes, they said it was no misfortune, but that it was the wisdom they had learned from your teaching.

WISE MAN

And you too have called me wise— you would be paid for that good opinion doubtless— Run to the kitchen, my wife will give you food and drink.

FOOL

That's foolish advice for a wise man to give,

WISE MAN

Why, Fool?

FOOL

What is eaten is gone— I want pennies for my bag. I must buy bacon in the shops, and nuts in the market, and strong drink for the time the sun is weak,

and snares to catch the rabbits, and the hares, and a big pot to cook them in.

WISE MAN

I have more to think about than giving pennies to your like, so run away.

FOOL

Give me a penny and I will bring you luck. The fishermen let me sleep among their nets in the loft because I bring them luck, and in the summer time, the wild creatures let me sleep near their nests and their holes. It is lucky even to look at me, but it is much more lucky to give me a penny. If I was not lucky I would starve.

WISE MAN

What are the shears for?

FOOL

I won't tell you. If I told you, you would drive them away.

WISE MAN

Drive them away, who would I drive away?

FOOL

I won't tell you.

WISE MAN

Not if I give you a penny?

FOOL

No.

WISE MAN

Not if I give you two pennies?

FOOL

You will be very lucky if you give me two pennies, but I won't tell you.

WISE MAN

Three pennies?

FOOL

Four, and I will tell you.

WISE MAN

Very well— four, but from this out I will not call you, Teigue the Fool.

FOOL

Let me come close to you, where nobody will hear me, but first you must promise not to drive them away. (Wise Man nods) Every day men go out dressed in black and spread great black nets over the hills, great black nets.

WISE MAN

A strange place that to fish in.

FOOL

They spread them out on the hills that they may catch the feet of the angels; but every morning just before the dawn, I go out and cut the nets with the shears and the angels fly away.

WISE MAN

(speaking with excitement) Ah, now I know that

• you are Teigue the Fool, You say that I am wise,
and yet I say, there are no angels.

FOOL

I have seen plenty of angels.

WISE MAN

No, no, you have not.

FOOL

They are plenty if you but look about you. They
are like the blades of grass.

WISE MAN

They are plenty as the blades of grass— I heard
that phrase when I was but a child and was told
folly.

FOOL

When one gets quiet. When one is so quiet that
there is not a thought in one's head maybe, there is
something that wakes up inside one, something
happy and quiet, and then all in a minute one can
smell summer flowers, and tall people go by, happy
and laughing, but they will not let us look at their
faces. Oh, no, it is not right that we should look at
their faces.

WISE MAN

You have fallen asleep upon a hill, yet, even those
that used to dream of angels dream now of other
things.

FOOL

I saw one but a moment ago—that is because I am lucky. It was coming behind me, but it was not laughing.

WISE MAN

There's nothing but what men can see when they are awake. Nothing, nothing.

FOOL

I knew you would drive them away.

WISE MAN

Pardon me, Fool,

I had forgotten who I spoke to.

Well, there are your four pennies—Fool, you are called

And all day long they cry, 'come hither, Fool.'

(The fool goes close to him)

Or else it's, 'Fool, be gone' (The fool goes further off)

Or, 'Fool, stand there' (The fool straightens himself up)

Or, 'Fool go sit in the corner' (The fool sits in the corner)

And all the while

What were they all but fools before I came.

What are they now, but mirrors that seem men,

Because of my image. Fool, hold up your head.

(Fool does so)

What foolish stories they have told of the ghosts
That fumbled with the clothes upon the bed,
Or creaked and shuffled in the corridor,
Or else, if they were pious bred,
Of angels from the skies,
That coming through the door,
Or, it maybe, standing there,
Would solidly out stare
The steadiest eyes with their unnatural eyes,
Aye, on a man's own floor.

(An angel has come in. It should be played by a man
if a man can be found with the right voice, and may
wear a little golden mask and a halo made of metal.)

Yet it is strange, the strangest thing I have known,
That I should still be haunted by the notion

That there's a crisis of the spirit wherein

We get new sight, and that they know some trick
To turn our thoughts for their own ends to frenzy,

Why do you put your finger to your lip,

And creep away?

(Fool goes out)

(Wise Man sees Angel) What are you? Who are
you?

I think I saw some like you in my dreams,

When but a child. That thing about your head,—

That brightness in your hair—that flowery branch

But I have done with dreams, I have done with
dreams.

ANGEL

I am the crafty one that you have called.

WISE MAN

How that I called?

ANGEL

I am the messenger.

WISE MAN

What message could you bring to one like me?

ANGEL

That you will die when the last grain of sand
Has fallen through this glass.

WISE MAN

I have a wife,

Children and pupils that I cannot leave,

Why must I die, my time is far away?

ANGEL

You have to die because no soul has passed
The heavenly threshold since you have opened
school,

But grass grows there, and rust upon the hinge;
And they are lonely that must keep the watch.

WISE MAN

And whither shall I go when I am dead?

ANGEL

You have denied there is a purgatory,
Therefore that gate is closed; you have denied
There is a heaven, and so that gate is closed.

WISE MAN

Where then ? For I have said there is no hell.

ANGEL

Hell is the place of those who have denied ;
They find there what they planted and what dug,
A Lake of Spaces, and a Wood of Nothing,
And wander there and drift, and never cease
Wailing for substance.

WISE MAN

Pardon me, blessed Angel,
I have denied and taught the like to others.
But how could I believe before my sight
Had come to me ?

ANGEL

It is too late for pardon.

WISE MAN

Had I but seen your face as now I see it,
But how can you that live but where we go
In the uncertainty of dizzy dreams
Know why we doubt. Parting, sickness and death,
The rotting of the grass, tempest and drouth,
These are the messengers that came to me.
Why are you silent ? You carry in your hands
God's pardon, and you will not give it me,
Why are you silent ? Were I not afraid,
I'd kiss your hands, no, no, the hem of your dress.

ANGEL

Only when all the world has testified,
May soul confound it, crying out in joy,
And laughing on its lonely precipice.
What's dearth and death and sickness to the soul,
That knows no virtue but itself, nor could it,
So trembling with delight and mother-naked,
Live unabashed if the arguing world stood by.

WISE MAN

It is as hard for you to understand
Why we have doubted, as it is for us
To banish doubt — what folly have I said ?
There can be nothing that you do not know,
Give me a year — a month — a week — a day,
I would undo what I have done — an hour —
Give me until the sand has run in the glass.

ANGEL

Though you may not undo what you have done,
I have this power — if you but find one soul,
That still believes that it shall never cease,
One fish to lie and spawn among the stones
Till the great fisher's net is full again,
You may, the purgatorial fire being passed,
Spring to your peace. (pupils sing in the distance)
‘Who stole your wits away
And where are they gone?’

WISE MAN

My pupils come,
Before you have begun to climb the sky
I shall have found that soul. They say they doubt,
But what their mothers dinned into their ears
Cannot have been so lightly rooted up,
Besides, I can disprove what I once proved—
And yet give me some thought, some argument,
More mighty than my own.

ANGEL

Farewell — farewell,
For I am weary of the weight of time.
(Angel goes out. Wise Man makes a step to follow
and pauses. Some of his pupils come in at the other
side of the stage.)

FIRST PUPIL

Master, master, you must choose the subject.
(Enter other pupils with Fool, about whom they
dance; all the pupils may have little cushions on
which presently they seat themselves)

SECOND PUPIL

Here is a subject — where have the Fool's wits
gone? (singing)
'Who dragged your wits away
Where no one knows?
Or have they run off
On their own pair of shoes?'

FOOL

Give me a penny.

FIRST PUPIL

The Master will find your wits,

SECOND PUPIL

And when they are found, you must not beg for pennies.

THIRD PUPIL

They are hidden somewhere in the badger's hole,
But you must carry an old candle end,
If you would find them.

FOURTH PUPIL

They are up above the clouds.

FOOL

Give me a penny, give me a penny.

FIRST PUPIL

(singing) 'Ill find your wits again,
Come, for I saw them roll,
To where old badger mumbles
In the black hole.'

SECOND PUPIL

(singing) 'No, but an angel stole them
The night that you were born,
And now they are but a rag,
On the moon's horn.'

WISE MAN

Be silent.

FIRST PUPIL

Can you not see that he is troubled? (all the pupils are seated)

WISE MAN

What do you think of when alone at night?
Do not the things your mothers spoke about
Before they took the candle from the bedside,
Rush up into the mind and master it,
Till you believe in them against your will?

SECOND PUPIL

(to first pupil) You answer for us.

THIRD PUPIL

(in a whisper to first pupil) Be careful what you say
If he persuades you to an argument
He will but turn us all to mockery.

FIRST PUPIL

We had no minds until you made them for us;
Our bodies only were our mother's work.

WISE MAN

You answer with incredible things. It is certain
That there is one, — though it may be but one —
Believes in God and in some heaven and hell —
In all those things we put into our prayers.

FIRST PUPIL

We thought those things before our minds were
born,
But that was long ago — we are not children.

WISE MAN

You are afraid to tell me what you think
Because I am hot and angry when I am crossed,
I do not blame you for it, but have no fear
For if there's one that sat on smiling there,
As though my arguments were sweet as milk
Yet found them bitter, I will thank him for it,
If he but speak his mind.

FIRST PUPIL

There is no one, Master,
There is not one but found them sweet as milk.

WISE MAN

The things that have been told us in our childhood
Are not so fragile.

SECOND PUPIL

We are no longer children.

THIRD PUPIL

We all believe in you and in what you have taught.

OTHER PUPILS

All, all, all, all, in you, nothing but you.

WISE MAN

I have deceived you—where shall I go for words—
I have no thoughts—my mind has been swept bare.
The messengers that stand in the fiery cloud,
Fling themselves out, if we but dare to question,
And after that, the Babylonian moon
Blots all away.

FIRST PUPIL

(to other pupils) I take his words to mean
That visionaries, and martyrs when they are raised
Above translunary things, and there enlightened,
As the contention is, may lose the light,
And flounder in their speech when the eyes open.

SECOND PUPIL

How well he imitates their trick of speech.

THIRD PUPIL

‘Their air of mystery.

FOURTH PUPIL

Their empty gaze,
 As though they'd looked upon some winged thing,
 And would not condescend to mankind after.

FIRST PUPIL

Master, we have all learnt that truth is learnt
When the intellect's deliberate and cold,
As it were a polished mirror that reflects
An unchanged world; and not when the steel melts,
Bubbling and hissing, till there's naught but fume.

WISE MAN.

When it is melted, when it all fumes up,
They walk, as when beside those three in the fur-
nace

The form of the fourth.

FIRST PUPIL

Master, there's none among us

That has not heard your mockery of these,
Or thoughts like these, and we have not forgot.

WISE MAN

Something incredible has happened — someone
has come,
Suddenly like a grey hawk out of the air,
And all that I declared untrue is true.

FIRST PUPIL

(to other pupils) You'd think the way he says it,
that he felt it.

There's not a mummer to compare with him.
He's something like a man.

SECOND PUPIL

Give us some proof.

WISE MAN

What proof have I to give, but that an angel
An instant ago was standing on that spot.
(The pupils rise)

THIRD PUPIL

You dreamed it, Master.

WISE MAN

I was awake as I am now.

FIRST PUPIL

(to the others) I may be dreaming now for all I
know.

He wants to show we have no certain proof
Of anything in the world.

SECOND PUPIL

There is this proof,
That shows we are awake— we have all one world
While every dreamer has a world of his own,
And sees what no one else can.

THIRD PUPIL

Teigue sees angels.
So when the Master says he has seen an angel,
He may have seen one.

FIRST PUPIL

Both may still be dreamers.
Unless it's proved the angels were alike.

SECOND PUPIL

What sort are the angels, Teigue?

THIRD PUPIL

That will prove nothing.
Unless we are sure, prolonged obedience
Has made one angel like another angel,
As they were eggs.

FIRST PUPIL

The Master's silent now:
For he has found that to dispute with us—
Seeing that he has taught us what we know—
Is but to reason with himself. Let us away,
And find if there is one believer left.

WISE MAN

Yes, yes. Find me but one that still believes

The things that we were told when we were children.

THIRD PUPIL

He'll mock and maul him.

FOURTH PUPIL

From the first I knew
He wanted somebody to argue with. (They go)

WISE MAN

I have no reason left, all dark, all dark.
(Pupils return laughing. They push forward fourth pupil)

FIRST PUPIL

Here, Master, is the very man you want.
He said, when we were studying the book,
That maybe after all the monks were right,
And you mistaken, and if we but gave him time,
He'd prove that it was so.

FOURTH PUPIL

I never said it.

WISE MAN

Dear friend, dear friend, do you believe in God?

FOURTH PUPIL

Master, they have invented this to mock me.

WISE MAN

You are afraid of me.

FOURTH PUPIL

They know well, Master,
That all I said was but to make them argue.
They've pushed me in to make a mock of me,
Because they knew I could take either side
And beat them at it.

WISE MAN

If you believe in God,
You are my soul's one friend. (Pupils laugh)
Mistress or wife
Can give us but our good or evil luck
Amid the howling world, but you shall give
Eternity, and those sweet-throated things
That drift above the moon. (The pupils look at
one another and are silent)

SECOND PUPIL

How strange he is.

WISE MAN

The angel that stood there upon that spot,
Said that my soul was lost unless I found,
Before the sands in the Hour-glass had run out,
One that believed.

FOURTH PUPIL

Cease mocking at me, Master.
For I am certain that there is no God
Nor immortality, and they that said it
Made a fantastic tale from a starved dream

To plague our hearts. Will that content you master?

WISE MAN

The giddy glass is emptier every moment,
And you stand there, debating, laughing and
wrangling.

Out of my sight! Out of my sight, I say.

(He drives them out)

I'll call my wife, for what can women do,
That carry us in the darkness of their bodies,
But mock the reason that lets nothing grow
Unless it grow in light. Bridget, Bridget.
A woman never ceases to believe.

Say what we will— Bridget, come quickly, Bridget.

(Bridget comes in wearing her apron. Her
sleeves turned up from her floury arms)

Wife, what do you believe in? Tell me the truth,
And not— as is the habit with you all —
Something you think will please me. Do you pray
Sometimes when you're alone in the house, do you
pray?

BRIDGET

Prayers— no, you taught me to leave them off long
ago. At first I was sorry, but I am glad now, for I
am sleepy in the evenings.

WISE MAN

Do you believe in God?

BRIDGET

Oh, a good wife only believes in what her husband tells her.

WISE MAN

But sometimes, when the children are asleep
And I am in the school, do you not think
About the Martyrs and the saints and the angels,
And all the things that you believed in once?

BRIDGET

I think about nothing— sometimes I wonder if the
linen is bleaching white, or I go out to see if the
crows are picking up the chicken's food.

WISE MAN

My God,— my God! I will go out myself.
My pupils said that they would find a man
That had the old belief— they may have found him.
Therefore I will go out— but if I go
The glass will let the sands run out unseen.
I cannot go— I cannot leave the glass.
Go call my pupils— I can explain all now,
Only when all our hold on life is shaken,
Only in spiritual terror can the Truth
Come through the broken mind— as the pease
burst
Out of a broken pease-cod.

(He clutches Bridget as she is going)
Say to them,

That nature would lack all in her most need,
Could not the soul find truth as in a flash,
Upon the battle-field, or in the midst
Of overwhelming waves, and say to them—
But no, they would but answer as I bid.

BRIDGET

You want somebody to get up an argument with.

WISE MAN

Look out and see if there is anyone
There in the street— I cannot leave the glass,
For somebody might shake it, and the sand
If it were shaken might run down on the instant.

BRIDGET

I don't understand a word you are saying. There's
a crowd of people talking to your pupils.

WISE MAN

Go out and find if they have found a man
Who did not understand me when I taught,
Or did not listen.

BRIDGET

It is a hard thing to be married to a man of learning
that must always be having arguments. Children,
don't be meddling with the bread while I am out.
(She goes out.)

WISE MAN

Strange that I should be blind to the great secret,
And that so simple a man might write it out

Upon a blade of grass or bit of rush
With naught but berry juice, and laugh to himself
Writing it out, because it was so simple. (Enter
Bridget followed by the Fool)

FOOL

Give me something; give me a penny to buy bacon
in the shops and nuts in the market, and strong
drink for the time when the sun is weak.

BRIDGET

I have no pennies. (to Wise man) Your pupils cannot find anybody to argue with you. There's nobody in the whole country with belief enough for a lover's oath. Can't you be quiet now, and not always wanting to have arguments. It must be terrible to have a mind like that.

WISE MAN

Then I am lost indeed.

BRIDGET

Leave me alone now, I have to make the bread for you and the children. (She goes into kitchen)

WISE MAN

Children, children!

BRIDGET

Your father wants you, run to him.

(Children run in)

WISE MAN

Come to me, children. Do not be afraid.

I want to know if you believe in Heaven,
God or the soul — no, do not tell me yet,
You need not be afraid I shall be angry,
Say what you please — so that it is your thought —
I wanted you to know before you spoke,
That I shall not be angry.

FIRST CHILD

We have not forgotten, Father.

SECOND CHILD

Oh, no, Father.

BOTH CHILDREN

(as if repeating a lesson) There is nothing we cannot see, nothing we cannot touch.

FIRST CHILD

Foolish people used to say that there was, but you have taught us better.

WISE MAN

Go to your mother, go — yet do not go
For she can teach you nothing. If I am dumb
I will have drowned you in the Lake of Spaces
And I, because the sands are running out,
Have but a moment to show it all in. Children,
The sap would die out of the blades of grass
Had they a doubt. They understand it all,
Being the fingers of God's certainty,
Yet can but make their sign into the air.
But could they find their tongues — they'd show it
all

But what am I to say that am but one,
When they are millions and they will not speak.
(Children have run out)

But they are gone; what made them run away?
(The fool comes in with a dandelion)

Look at me, tell me if my face is changed,
Is there a notch of the fiend's nail upon it
Already? Is it terrible to sight?

Because the moment's near. (Going to glass)

I dare not look,

I dare not know the moment when they come
To carry me away. (covers glass) Will there be a
footfall

Or will there be a sort of tearing sound,
Or else a cracking, as though an iron claw
Had gripped the threshold stone?
(Fool has begun to blow the dandelion)

What are you doing?

FOOL

Wait a minute — four — five — six —

WISE MAN

What are you doing that for?

FOOL

I am blowing the dandelion to find out what hour
it is.

WISE MAN

You have heard everything, and that is why

You'd find what hour it is — you'd find that out,
That you may look upon a fleet of devils
Dragging my soul away. You shall not stop,
I will have no one here when they come in,
I will have no one sitting there — no one —
And yet — and yet — there is something strange
about you

Are you the one I seek? Do you believe
In God and the soul, in the undying stuff
That all things have been made of from the first?

FOOL

So you ask me now. I thought when you were asking
your pupils, 'will he ask, Teigue the Fool. Yes,
he will, he will, no, he will not — yes he will.' But
Teigue will say nothing. Teigue will say nothing.

WISE MAN

Tell me quickly.

FOOL

I said, 'Teigue knows everything, not even the
green-eyed cats and the hares that milk the cows
have Teigue's wisdom' but, Teigue will not speak,
he says nothing.

WISE MAN

Speak, speak, for underneath the cover there
The sand is running from the upper glass,
And when the last grain's through, I shall be lost
Unless I have lit upon unshaken faith

Somewhere in somebody.

FOOL

I will not speak. I will not tell you what is in my mind. I will not tell you what is in my bag. You might steal away my thoughts. I met a bodach on the road yesterday, and he said, 'Teigue, tell me how many pennies are in your bag; I will wager three pennies that there are not twenty pennies in your bag; let me put in my hand and count them.' But I gripped the bag the tighter and when I go to sleep at night, I hide the bag where nobody knows.

WISE MAN

There's but one pinch of sand, and I am lost
If you are not he I seek.

FOOL

O, what a lot the Fool knows, but he says nothing.

WISE MAN

(seizing him) I kneel to you — you are the man I
have sought

You alone can save me.

FOOL

No, no, what should poor Teigue know, Teigue
that is out in all weathers, Teigue that sleeps in the
fishers' loft, poor Teigue the Fool.

(He breaks away and goes out)

WISE MAN

The last hope is gone,

And now that it's too late I see it all,
We perish into God and sink away
Into reality — the rest's a dream. (The Fool comes
back)

FOOL

There was one there — there by the threshold stone,
waiting there and said, 'go in Teigue, and tell him
everything that he asks you. He will give you a
penny if you tell him.'

WISE MAN

I know enough, that know God's will prevails. .

FOOL

Waiting till the moment had come — That is what
the one out there was saying, but I might tell you
what you asked. That is what he was saying.

WISE MAN

Be silent. May God's will prevail on the instant,
Although His will be my eternal pain.

I have no question:

It is enough, I know what fixed the station
Of star and cloud.

And knowing all, I cry,

That what so God has willed,

On the instant be fulfilled,

Though that be my damnation.

The stream of the world has changed its course

And with the stream my thoughts have run

Into some cloudy thunderous spring

That is its mountain source —

Aye, to some frenzy of the mind,
For all that we have done's undone,
Our speculation but as the wind.
(He dies)

FOOL

Wise man— Wise man, wake up and I will tell you everything for a penny. It is I, poor Teigue the Fool. Why don't you wake up, and say, 'There is a penny for you, Teigue.' No, no, you will say nothing. You and I, we are the two fools, we know everything, but we will not speak.

(Angel enters holding a casket)

O, look what has come from his mouth ! O, look what has come from his mouth— the white butterfly. He is dead and I have taken his soul in my hands; but I know why you open the lid of that golden box. I must give it to you. There then, (he puts butterfly in casket) He has gone through his pains, and you will open the lid in the Garden of Paradise. (He closes curtain and remains outside it) He is gone, he is gone, he is gone, but come in everybody in the world and look at me.

'I hear the wind a blow

I hear the grass a grow,

And all that I know, I know.'

But I will not speak, I will run away.

(He goes out)

THE END

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